

# **Spiritual NOT Religious**

**Great for you, but what about society?**

**Dr. Daniel Wegener January 10, 2024**

# Spiritual — Oxford

- 1. Relating to or affecting the human spirit or soul as opposed to material or physical things
- 2. Relating to religion or religious beliefs



Caption

# Religious — Merriam-Webster

- 1. Relating to or manifesting faithful devotion to an acknowledged ultimate reality or deity
- 2. Of, or relating to, or devoted to religious beliefs or observances.



# Church Membership and Attendance?

- **New York Magazine**
  - **Belong to a House of Worship**
    - **1937 — 73 %**
    - **2019 — 47 %**
    - **Millennials — 36 %**
    - **By 2070 less than half Christians**

# Church Membership and Attendance

- Forbes Magazine

- No religious preference — 1998 — 8 %  
2020 — 21 %

**Members:**

Born before	(76 +)	66 %
Boomers	(57-75)	58 %
Gen-Xers	(43 - 58)	50 %
Millenials	(27 - 42)	46 %

# Membership and Attendance

- ***Fox News***
  - **66 % of young adults (18 to 22) stopped attending in last 10 years**
    - **Went to college**
    - **Started work**
    - **Church or pastor related (not feeling connected) — 73 %**
    - **Religious, ethical, or political beliefs differed — 70 %**
    - **Unconnected to church leadership — 63 %**

**WHY?**

**Will...**

***Workism***  
***Paganism***

**Prevail?**

# **MATERIALISM — Oxford**

- 1. A tendency to consider material possessions or physical Comfort as more important than spiritual values**
- 2. A preoccupation or stress upon material rather than. intellectual things**



# INDIVIDUALISM

- *Social fragmentation*
- *Economic inequality*
- *Family breakdown*
- *Other dysfunctions both personal and social*
  - — *Robert Bellah, Social Historian of U.S.*

*It's not just about religion—it's about society itself!*

# CONSEQUENCES

## EXAMPLE:

University of Pennsylvania study in 2001

Congregations contributed \$ 250 Million to Metro Philadelphia  
*IN JUST ONE YEAR!*

*333 Cities in U.S. (100,000 +) x 250 Million = 83,250,000,000*

# “Unchurching of America”

- Americans are *re-writing* rules for a spiritual life
- Some churches becoming more like corporations
- Some attend to be fed *spiritually* like a spectator
- Others seek mutual participation and to be active
  
- CHURCH — *a place or a community?*

# Spirituality

- **Listen and then ACT**
- **Information to application and action**
- **“Love thy neighbor” —.**  
**concept only or pattern of behavior?**

# Conclusion

**We are re-defining:**

- **Religiousness**
- **Spirituality**
- **Community**
- **Identity**
- **Church**
- **American Society**

